

SENATE, No. 2127

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

213th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 2, 2008

Sponsored by:

Senator RICHARD J. CODEY

District 27 (Essex)

Senator SHIRLEY K. TURNER

District 15 (Mercer)

Senator JENNIFER BECK

District 12 (Mercer and Monmouth)

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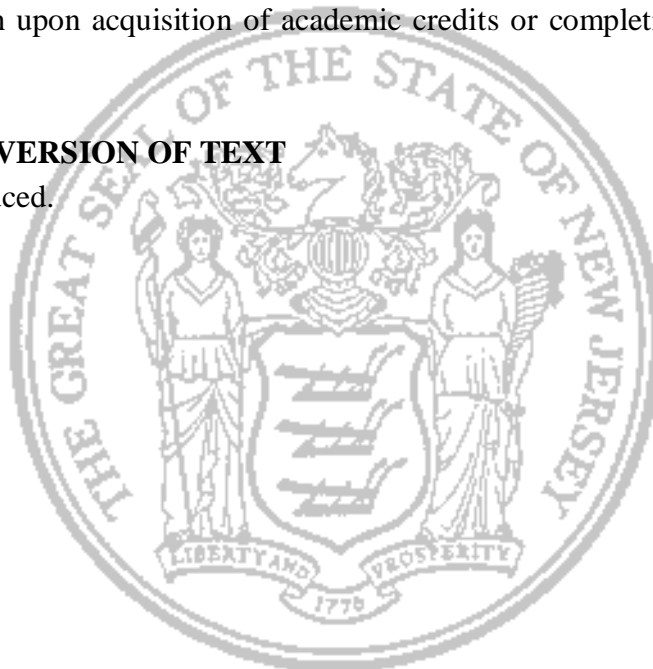
Senator Bateman

SYNOPSIS

Requires certain conditions be met in order for school districts to provide their employees with tuition assistance for coursework or additional compensation upon acquisition of academic credits or completion of a degree program.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 10/3/2008)

1 **AN ACT** concerning certain benefits for school district employees
2 and supplementing chapter 6 of Title 18A of the New Jersey
3 Statutes.

4

5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*

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8 1. In order for a board of education to provide to an employee
9 tuition assistance for coursework taken at an institution of higher
10 education or additional compensation upon the acquisition of
11 additional academic credits or completion of a degree program at an
12 institution of higher education:

13 a. The institution shall be a duly authorized institution of
14 higher education as defined in section 3 of P.L.1986, c.87
15 (C.18A:3-15.3);

16 b. The employee shall obtain approval from the superintendent
17 of schools prior to enrollment in any course for which tuition
18 assistance is sought. Prior approval from the superintendent shall
19 also be required for the payment of any additional compensation
20 upon acquisition of additional academic credits or completion of a
21 degree program. In the case of a superintendent, the approvals shall
22 be obtained from the board of education;

23 c. The employee shall attain a grade at or above a 3.00 in each
24 course for which tuition assistance is sought, when a 4.00 equals an
25 A grade;

26 d. The tuition assistance per credit shall equal an amount no
27 greater than the current average cost per credit at Rutgers, The State
28 University;

29 e. The tuition assistance shall be provided at the end of the
30 course and upon receipt by the district of the course grade and
31 confirmation of the payment of tuition, provided that the employee
32 is an employee of the school district at the time the tuition
33 assistance is provided. If the employee leaves the district within
34 one year of the payment of the tuition assistance, the employee shall
35 be responsible for reimbursing the district for the amount of the
36 tuition assistance; and

37 f. The tuition assistance or additional compensation shall be
38 provided only for a course or degree related to the employee's
39 current or future job responsibilities.

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41 2. This act shall take effect on July 1 of the school year next
42 following the date of enactment, except that this act shall not be
43 deemed to impair an obligation set forth in a collective negotiations
44 agreement or an individual contract of employment in effect on the
45 effective date.

STATEMENT

This bill requires that in order for a board of education to provide its employees tuition assistance for academic coursework at an institution of higher education or additional compensation upon the acquisition of additional academic credits or completion of a degree program at an institution of higher education:

1) The institution of higher education must be a “duly authorized institution of higher education,” which is defined in law as an in-State institution licensed by the Commission on Higher Education or an out-of-State institution licensed by the appropriate state agency and regionally accredited or seeking accreditation by the appropriate accrediting body recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Education or the United States Department of Education;

2) The employee must obtain approval from the superintendent of schools prior to enrollment in any course for which tuition assistance is sought. Prior approval must also be required for the payment of any additional compensation upon acquisition of additional academic credits or completion of a degree program. In the case of a superintendent of schools, the approvals must be obtained from the board of education;

3) The employee must attain a grade at or above a “B” in each course for which tuition assistance is sought;

4) The tuition assistance per credit must be set at an amount no greater than the current average cost per credit at Rutgers, The State University;

5) The tuition assistance may only be provided at the end of the course and upon receipt by the district of the course grade earned by the employee and confirmation of the payment of tuition, provided that the employee is an employee of the school district at the time the tuition assistance is provided. If the employee leaves the district within one year of the payment of the tuition assistance, the employee must reimburse the district for the amount of the tuition assistance provided; and

6) The course or degree must be related to the employee’s current or future job responsibilities in order for tuition assistance or additional compensation to be paid.

The bill would become effective on July 1 of the school year next following the date of enactment. However, the provisions of the bill will not be deemed to impair an obligation set forth in any collective negotiations agreement or any individual contract of employment in effect on that July 1.